

Recommendations from AC Executive Committee on U of M Study

August 2012

Summary of Discussion:

At the July 2012 OCNMS Advisory Council (AC) meeting, the AC decided that its Executive Committee (Chip Boothe, Brady Scott and Ellen Matheny) should review the AC-specific recommendations in the University of Michigan's Evaluation of OCNMS's Institutional Relationships Study and present the AC with its recommendations in September. Other AC members were invited to join the Executive Committee in this effort and Lee Whitford (Education Alternate) volunteered.

The Executive Committee and Lee Whitford met via conference call to formulate their recommendations on August 10, 2012. Ellen, Brady, Chip and Lee were in attendance, as were OCNMS staffers Lauren Bennett, Carol Bernthal, and George Galasso. Both Lauren Bennett and Brady Scott took notes. Brady drafted the group's formal recommendations and Lauren drafted the Summary of Discussion.

While the conclusion of the U of M study does not make formal recommendations related specifically to the AC, the study makes mention of several suggestions for improving OCNMS's relationship with the AC. These suggestions were provided by study participants and appear scattered through the Analysis and Findings chapter (pp. 33 – 116). The majority of participant suggestions related to the AC occurred in response to survey question 7b, "what can OCNMS do to Achieve Collaborative and Coordinated Management (pp. 53 – 60)?"

The Executive Committee focused the majority of its discussion on the following suggestions:

- "Empower the SAC to be more involved in decision-making" (p. 59) ;
- "[Set] up an advisory council working group to collaborate with the coastal MRCs, tribes, and other managers and interests in coastal communities to identify the top shared priorities in the OCNMS management plan" (p. 60);
- "Given fiscal constraints and the fact that most, if not all, of these meetings are one day or less, teleconferencing, although tried before, should be pursued again" (p. 59).

In reflecting upon the suggestions above, the Executive Committee took into consideration the AC charter, the AC 2012 work plan, as well as the strategies and activities in the OCNMS Management Plan (which had not been finalized at the time the U of M survey was completed). The committee developed a suite of five recommendations (below) to present to the AC.

It should be noted that, in general, the Executive Committee felt that the most substantial concerns raised in the U of M study had less to do with OCNMS's relationship with the AC and more to do with its government-to-government relationships with the Coastal Treaty Tribes. While Executive Committee members believe these government-to-government concerns are important, they felt that such concerns are most appropriately addressed, not by the AC, but by the governments themselves.

Executive Committee Recommendations:

1. Remind AC members and members of the public at each meeting that the AC is an advisory body and not a decision making body per the AC Charter. This could be done verbally by the Chair at the beginning of each meeting, and/or by having printed copies of the Advisory Council Purpose and Scope available at each meeting.
2. Re-frame language used in the work plan, agenda, and during meetings to explicitly call out when and how advice and recommendations are solicited, discussed and provided.
 - a. Revise the work plan to show by each topic where *advice and recommendations* are:
 - i. requested as action input to the AC,
 - ii. identified for action as an output from the AC, and
 - iii. completed as an outcome once the action has been taken.
 - b. Explicitly show at each meeting how each agenda item fits into the work plan and how the topic will involve future AC advice and recommendations.
 - c. Amend the “Future Agenda Topics” item included on the agenda at the end of each meeting to focus on advice and recommendations and so that suggestions are either tied into existing topics on the work plan or identified as a new emerging topic consistent with the management plan in which advice and recommendations may be warranted.
3. Request enhanced reporting by Sanctuary in superintendent reports, Office Report documents and the AC Work Plan for how:
 - a. AC advice and recommendations have explicitly been used in OCNMS decision making
 - b. future opportunities for AC advice and recommendations will be solicited for use in OCNMS decision making.
 - c. AC members can be involved in OCNMS efforts, activities or opportunities.
4. Expand goals, actions and outputs of *Advisory Council Effectiveness* work plan topic to address specific items recommended by U of M study, including:
 - a. How AC can work to further understand communities in which the sanctuary is located.
 - b. How AC can work to provide more opportunities for collaboration.
 - c. How AC can work to build healthy relationships to achieve effective outcomes.
5. Enhance public involvement in AC meetings, which is currently limited to in person meetings, by setting up at least one AC meeting in 2013 with teleconference technology to determine if this enhances involvement.